The West India Question

by

Charles Stewart

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THE

WEST INDIA QUESTION.

IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION

WOULD BE

SAFE FOR THE MASTERS;—PROFITABLE FOR THE MASTERS;—HAPPY FOR THE SLAVES;—RIGHT IN THE GOVERNMENT;—ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATION;——WOULD INTERFERE WITH NO FEELINGS BUT SUCH AS ARE DISGRACEFUL AND DESTRUCTIVE;—CANNOT BE POSTPONED WITHOUT CONTINUALLY INCREASING DANGER.

AN OUTLINE FOR IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION:

AND

REMARKS ON COMPENSATION.

BY CHARLES STEWART.

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THE WEST INDIA QUESTION.

GREAT BRITAIN rather totters than stands on a pinnacle—her crimes are gnawing at her heart—every one that loves her, trembles for her safety, and anxiously enquires into the causes of her danger.

It is the object of the following pages to point out one of those causes—a master cause—and to suggest its remedy. Should the writer appear severe, let it be remembered, that no disorder of any magnitude, whether physical or moral, can be removed by lenitives. The medical poison must be given at once; the limb must be amputated; the lust must be crucified while it is not yet too late, or the patient perishes. The writer disclaims entirely, all intention of giving offence. It is the extinction of crime, not the injury of criminals, which he seeks; and he speaks boldly of criminals, that their iniquity may not prove their own and their country's ruin.

The case to which he alludes is *Negro Slavery*. As a political evil he meddles not with it; but as a moral crime, it is a common nuisance, and fills him with horror and alarm. He finds it an infraction of all righteous law. He sees that it is the bane of all true love; and act of high-treason against God: and an outrage, concentrating in itself all outrages, against man. He cannot believe the Bible without being persuaded, that the fiercest vengeance of Almighty God, the moral and righteous ruler of the universe, is waxing hotter and hotter against us every moment that we persist in it. He knows that amongst the actual possessors and managers of Negro Slave property, there are some of the most honorable men in the nation; men who in other respects are examples of excellent and noble things; but he cannot forget that He who said, "Do not commit adultery," said also, "Let the oppressed go free." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." And he therefore cannot permit himself to be blinded by the glare, however bright, of *partial* obedience: a whole heart, a brotherly heart, is what God requires; the undissembling voice of which shall be, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will to man," without respect of persons; and not a heart yielded merely so far as may be sanctioned by convenience, or interest, or prejudice; or what men call prudence and benevolence, when they substitute this world's wisdom, for cordial and confiding obedience. In the course of the following observations, where things apparently harsh shall be found, let them apply *only* where they fit; but where they *do* fit, the writer entreats the persons in question, whoever they be, to remember, that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," and to believe, that as far as he knows himself, this is his motive for writing as he does: not to judge, but to warn; not as desiring to destroy, but as wishing to be an instrument of salvation.

The subject, is Negro Slavery as it exists under British power. And the question is, how may it be remedied?

The Negro Slave party, that is, they who are interested, from whatever motives, in the continuance of Negro Slavery, honorable, wealthy, talented and united, declare that immediate abolition is forbidden by self-preservation; regard for the negroes; rights of the masters; pledges of government; and national interests. And another reason, not much avowed, but well understood, and of all others the most deeply felt by the great body of managers and of resident proprietors, is the fear of losing that endless variety of gratifications, which the possession of despotic power affords. But of all, few or none under the British empire, pretend at this day, that Negro Slavery should be interminable. All agree that it ought to be eventually abolished; but they require time, in order to avert the dangers, which they anticipate from so a great and sudden a change as immediate emancipation would produce. Now if it can be clearly shown, that these objections have no force, either in nature or in fact; that the immediate emancipation of the negroes, is the best way to give the masters security, and the negroes happiness; to absolve the duty of the government, and to support or improve the colonial and national revenues: and if it can be further shown, that delay is a cruel and dangerous delusion: and that the licentious gratifications of despotic power, dear though they be to the sinner, as a hand or an eye, are altogether ruinous and degrading: the difficulties which are heaped like mountains in the way of duty, will be removed, and unless rottenness have altogether gotton hold of us, we shall open our eyes and see how safe, and only safe it is, to obey God and let the oppressed go free.

Can such proofs be supplied; or where are they?

I propose briefly exhibiting them under the following heads, by showing that THE IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION OF THE NEGROES—

1st. Would be safe and profitable for the masters.

2nd. Would be happy for the negroes.

3rd. Would be right in the government.

4th Would be advantageous to the nation.

5th. Would interfere with no passions but such as are disgraceful and destructive; and

6th. Cannot be postponed without great danger.

But two things must be premised; viz:

I. *The real condition of the enslaved negroes in the British Colonies; and*

II. *What we mean by immediate emancipation.*

1st. The real condition of the enslaved negroes in the British Slave Colonies.

Each estate is a little despotism: the master may imprison,* flog, torture, sell and separate his slaves, under certain limitations essentially more or less inefficient, at his discretion. He gives them no wages; merely supporting them as beasts are supported. He may impose upon them, at all times, an overwhelming amount of labor; and this is left particularly to his own ungoverned discretion, during the season of crop, or for about four months in each year. His slaves may be seized and sold without any fault, or imputation of a fault, for their master's debts. They can be mortgaged like goods and chattels; and the greater number of them could not obtain their liberty, though thousands were offered to redeem them, except their masters pleased. When they come or are brought to England, they are free while in England; but should they return to their native country, they are again made slaves. This is their general condition. Kind masters alleviate it; but it is generally aggravated by unkindness; and

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*See Jamaica Slave law of 1831. Regulations for Crown Colonies of 1831 Nine Letters to the Duke of Wellington, by Ignotus. J. Jeremie's Four Essays. James Stephen's 2 volumes. Jamaica Christian Record. Colonial Gazettes, and Parliamentary Papers.

where sugar is cultivated, this aggravation is so severe, as to eventuate yearly in the slaughter of thousands of them, by the most lingering and painful deaths.*

But who are these slaves? Or of what enormous transgressions have they been guilty, that they should thus be consigned to a state of such hopeless and consuming oppression? Where is the record of their crimes and condemnation? Who were their judges? By what special commission were they tried?

They are British subjects. The great body of them were born within the king's allegiance, and have never forfeited his protection by any crime. They were never condemned; never tried; never accused. They are unoffending British subjects, with the same rights to the king's protection which any other British subject has;—endowed with property in their own bodies by their Maker, and inheriting a right to the king's protection, by having been born within his allegiance. They are slaves merely because they are in the hands of their enemies, who are stronger than they; and because their king and their country, who are bound by the most sacred ties to do them right, still choose to crouch beneath the pride and wickedness of their oppressors, and, with God's judgments ringing a thunder alarum through the world, to leave his poor to be destroyed.

2ndly. What do we mean by immediate emancipation?

We mean, immediately to treat the unoffending negroes in their true character, as guiltless British subjects; to give them the protection of the law, until they shall have been guilty of some crime, and have been fairly tried by a jury of their peers, and found guilty; to pay them fair wages for their labor; and to leave them to enjoy the fruits of their industry with their families. In short, we mean, immediately to make them the subjects of wise and righteous laws, instead of leaving them the slaves of private and irresponsible caprice. The following extract from J. Jeremie's work on Colonial Slavery, will fairly introduce our subject.

"Hitherto nothing had been done at St. Lucia, either legally or practically. General Mainwaring had, it is true, advised the planters to make an experiment, in July 1823, immediately on his receiving the original resolutions of the House of Commons; but this attempt, if entered on by some, was soon universally discontinued. The first draft of the slave law was completed at the close of the year 1825, when he had been nearly twelve months in the colony, and had had, as conceived, the best opportunities of forming a judgment. He had taken the most respectable colonial information, had made a tour of the island that he might ascertain, *de visu*, what was the actual condition of the slaves, and had revised carefully every enactment which appeared in the books of the colony.

"The opinion thus formed by himself amounted to this, that he conceived what had been alleged, of the general cruelties of slavery, was a downright misrepresentation; and this opinion was laid upon the tables of parliament in the subsequent year.—But hitherto the slave had not enjoyed the liberty of freely communicating with his protectors; he had not enjoyed those important rights which rendered him in any degree independent of his manager.

"Scarcely was this opinion transmitted, and the new slave law promulgated, than a negro came before him with a collar rivetted round his neck, from which projected three prongs of about ten inches each in length, and at the end of each of those prongs were inserted three smaller ones about an inch long, and these were attached to a chain, reaching to fetters joining round his ancles. His back and limbs were wealed from neck to foot, and he declared that this collar was kept on him by day and

* See Population Returns, as quoted from Parliamentary papers in the House of Commons, by Brougham and Buxton.

by night; that he worked with it in the field; and on his return was immured in a solitary cell; and that this course had been practised for some months in order to prevent his running away, the crime for which he was principally charged. This might however be a solitary instance.

"A commission of three gentlemen of reputed humanity, namely, an officer holding the situation of Procureur de Roi, or official protector of slaves, together with the commandant of the quarter in which the plantation was situated, and the commandant of the neighboring quarter, were sent out to investigate the affair. These gentlemen returned with a written report, wherein not a word of the Negro's statement was shaken.—They admitted that there were three other men, at the time, on the estate, with collars of the same description, and that those collars were in use in the country.

"The Procureur du Roi added, that the collars in use were not quite so heavy; but the commissioners, apparently with a view of settling that point, had weighed the collar, and affirmed that it was heavier than usual. The report also stated, that there was a woman covered with sores, who was found in chains, and had been so chained for near two years; and yet the commissioners reported that the estate was well managed, and that the arrangements were good!—This was not a remote period, but in the year 1826.

"As may be supposed, the report was not satisfactory to others, as to those gentlemen. But no sooner was it known that the law was to be rigorously adhered to than reports of insubordination among the Negroes, and of the necessity of a militia, or some other armed protecting force to keep them in order, were universally circulated; all which not only surprised me but was at that time incomprehensible. A proclamation was however issued against these collars. What followed? Scarcely two months afterwards, other reports were spread of discontent and actual mutiny of so serious a nature having broken out on the same estate, that the principal officers of government were directed to investigate the matter anew. The result was, that in lieu of the collar, the following punishments had been used. The women were hung by the arms to a peg, raised so high above their heads that the toes alone touched the ground, the whole weight of the body resting on the wrist of the arms, or the tip of the toes. The report of a mutiny was mere invention.

"This torture was also put down, one of the offenders fined, and the other imprisoned. But what was the third expedient adopted? The field-stocks,—an invention forwarded from Trinidad, and which was actually legalized by the regulations drawn up by myself — so little aware was I of the severity of the punishment; indeed my attention was drawn to it by a planter himself. The field-stocks are in short, or at least may be rendered, nothing less than the most cruel picketing. They are in the shape of a pillory, the hands of the slave are inserted in grooves, which may be raised to any height above the head, and the feet are inserted in other grooves at the bottom of the instrument, the toes alone being made to touch the ground; the body is thus suspended in mid-air, its whole weight resting on the wrist and toes."

And it was in view of these facts, not as solitary cases, but as exhibiting a fair, general character of the natural outworkings of Negro Slavery, that J. Jeremie, in alluding to the proceedings at an Anti-Slavery Meeting which he had attended just before he left England, says, "On reading over these proceedings now, it is singular how altered they appear to my mind. With the experience I have since had of Slavery, there is not a sentiment I could not now adopt."

J. Jeremie's work presents as luminous and fair a picture of the subject as could be drawn. Every person who would know what Negro Slavery actually is, should read it.

And now for our argument.

I. *The immediate emancipation of the negroes, would be safe and profitable for the masters.*

First.—It would be safe. We will take Jamaica for an example.

What is the question?—It is to cease immediately from giving six-seventh's of the whole population, all the reasons which can be given them, to hate us and to destroy us if they could. It is immediately to give them all the reasons in our power to give them, to respect and love us. It is immediately to cease from keeping their interests and our interests at drawn daggers. It is immediately to make our interests and their interests one. Acting as we do at present, we expect safety while we are incessantly goading them to despair and revenge!! and we fear revenge and hatred if we should give them cause for love!! But the righted and cherished man, as a general rule is always safer than the wronged and insulted one. By restoring them to their unforfeited rights as subjects, instead of leaving them the slaves of the petty tyrants of the plantations, our physical force would be increased—*our wisdom to provide and our power to coerce would remain the same.* And it is entirely out of rational belief, that the same power and wisdom, which are sufficient to keep them in order under the most deadly provocations, should not be able to keep them in order, under the wise and vigorous sway of righteousness and love. When does a man begin to hate you? When you wrong him surely—not when you right him! How long will a man continue to hate you? As long as you continue to provoke him to do so by continuing to wrong him! How may you get his love? By repenting before God and humbling yourself before your brother—by "ceasing to do evil and learning to do well."—This is the whole secret—God has taught it to us. The history of the world is full of illustrations of its healing excellence. The only difficulty is with the wrong doer. He hates the safe and pleasant path of cordial obedience; he sees a lion in the way, where there is none; he rushes into all forbidden paths to avoid the monster which he has imagined, and then wonders, like an idiot, at the ruin with which he finds himself surrounded; or like a fiend, he turns upon those who have fearlessly in love, done all they could to preserve him, and blames them for what he himself has wrought. The history of the negroes is replete with evidence of their sense of wrong, and of the power of kindness over their minds. Here is an instance.

"In 1794, the negroes in Guadaloupe, were proclaimed the subjects of law, and were freed from the tyranny of caprice. At the moment, a French gentleman was lying in prison, his four hundred negroes came in a body to the prison in which he was confined, and obtained leave to speak to him.—'Massa,' they said, 'they tell us we free now; we no understand that; we no know dem massa, but we know you; you always kind to us; we come ask you, massa; you tell us, what we do.'"

Other views concur in proving the safety of the measure in question. Indecision in right, is nearly as ruinous as decision in wrong; it blights whatever it touches. In the case before us, the government is perplexed with all its difficulties; the nation is increasingly dissatisfied, while their unoffending fellow subjects are perishing unredressed. The slave-master is confounded by it in every speculation; enterprise withers; credit fails, or is obtained at a ruinous premium. The oppressed negroes are now buoyed up by hope: again they are goaded to madness and despair; meanwhile, with the progress of knowledge, they are unavoidably becoming more and more acquainted with their rights as British subjects, equally entitled with their masters to the king's protection; they are continually gaining new force (as far as the cultivation of sugar does not *kill them off*) to vindicate what every British spirit would die rather than relinquish. And the wrath of God is waxing hotter and hotter against us, while we hug the entanglements of our wickedness, and refuse the path

of duty, which would at once disenthral us, by obeying God and letting our oppressed brethren go free.

Three possibilities only exist of preventing the slaves from vindicating their rights, if we do not emancipate them ere it be too late.

1st. Encouraging and increasing the cultivation of sugar, so as to increase the annual slaughter of which we are already guilty, and thus eventually *to exterminate them entirely!*

2nd. The shutting out of knowledge from them altogether.

3rd. The general establishment of the christian spirit in its sweetest, gentlest, meekest form.

The first of these, that is their destruction by sugar, is in operation; it is reeking with the blood of hundreds of thousands already slaughtered, and is clamorous for aid to complete its work of death. Consumers of slave sugar, look to it well; you will want a good answer at the day of judgment.

The second, that is keeping them in ignorance, we have passed by and cannot return to it. Knowledge is abroad; it is spreading, and *will* spread; it is searching out the lies of ages, and exposing and overturning them; and nothing but *the truth in love* is capable of arresting its surges, and of confining them to limits of order and happiness. Seek to circumscribe it by other means, and you only dam up the flood, that with a deeper and mightier swell it may presently roll over you, and bury you with your puny barriers in a deeper ruin.

The third, that is the attainment of the christian spirit, is dependent upon a mightier energy than man's; and even when men seek it, they so mar and hinder the object of their own pursuit, by their own discrepances, that for one christian spirit which they gain of the meek and lowly order above-mentioned, they gain a thousand warlike christians, who like the pious officers of our army and navy, at once draw the sword of flesh in the battles of this world, and the sword of the spirit in the battles of a better. As far indeed, as christianity of the meeker stamp is obtained, security is obtained against resistance by the sword. But christains of this holy order, above all others, have learnt to obey God rather than man, and when called upon for unlawful labor, or when enticed to sinful gratifications, *they* are *they* who would *first die.*

The great body of Christians, however, are plainly warrior minds; and while Great Britain keeps a single soldier without forfeiting the claim to christianity, it would be the mere hypocrisy of pride, to accuse the poor negro of abandoning his Savior, because in a far more urgent and sacred cause, he wielded the same weapon in vindication of rights which he has never forfeited, and which are the dearest and most sacred that belong to earth.

The Colonists in America, feared, despised and oppressed the natives; the natives, a proud and revengeful people, greedily returned wrong for wrong. Each side contended for the mastery by evil doing; they waded in each other's blood, and of course, the weakest fell. The history is fraught with horror, but amidst its darkness, one bright gleam appears; a single colony, without forts, without soldiers, without arms, plunged into the midst of the savages, lived amidst them, traded with them, and was safe. Blood flowed around, but in Pennsylvania all was peace. And why? Why because the settlers in Pennsylvania contended with God's arms, with the weapons of truth, and equity, and love, and found them mighty, as they ever are when faithfully wielded. They overcame evil with good; they treated men as brethren, and found a brother's heart, even in the wild warrior's bosom; and why not we, in the kind African's? The whole history of the negro proves, that it is next to impossible to goad him to revenge; and that nothing is easier than to win his affections.

But secondly, the immediate emancipation of the negroes, would be

profitable to the masters. Slavery is in its own nature a state of degradation. The *degree* of the evil may be mitigated, but the extinction of slavery can alone fully remedy it. This disgrace unavoidably goes over to the labor in which slaves are employed, wherever, as in the West Indies, the slaves form a majority of the whole population; and the necessary result of this is, that the free people that spurn such labor: mitigate the crime as you will, that disgrace and spurning remain; but abolish slavery, and at once the obloquy which attached to their labor, because it was the labor of slaves, is removed; and those thousands of the same color already free, whose circumstances imperiously need such work, and who are well disposed to labor, but who prefer every suffering to disgrace, will add to your productive force in the cultivation of the soil.

The gradual system essentially involves increasing facilities of emancipation; with these facilities the number of free colored people must necessarily increase, and the natural increase of the slaves, obtained by the mitigated wretchedness of their condition, would be proportionably kept down. But since the existence of slavery renders field labor degrading; and since slaves alone therefore can generally be got to do it; the productiveness of the colonies must be retarded by the retarded increase of the slaves, if not by their absolute decrease; and the agricultural ruin of the slave states must be the result, (a result indeed, all but produced already,) except emancipation or revolution prevent it. Under the present system, all right sense of character is chilled or extinguished. The negroes most naturally think that they have a right, whenever they can find an opportunity, to plunder their plunderers; and they do this, not merely by purloining a little sugar or ground provisions, &c. now and then; but by laboring, while they *do labor*, as inefficiently as they dare; and by evading labor altogether whenever they can. But if freed, a sense of character would necessarily revive; their own wants would concur with higher principles in awakening and cherishing it; stealing instead of appearing lawful to them, as it now almost inevitably does from the dreadful example set them by their masters, would be regarded as a crime; and all the motives to evading labor which are inherent in slavery, would be done away.

As a necessary result of their emancipation, they would more or less accumulate property; this would give them a personal interest, of which they could not remain long unaware, in the security of property, and thus their interests and affections would become more and more identified with the interests of the public. Here we ought to observe that in our slave colonies generally, the number of laborers does not equal the demand, so that no one, who could work, need suffer; so great, indeed, is the want of laborers, that little children of six years of age can earn their own livelihood.

Whatever peculiar regulations (if any) might be deemed necessary, upon the first promulgation of the restoration to the negro of his unforfeited rights, as having been born in the king's legiance; such regulations should be expressly limited by law to an early date, and could only be necessary for a short time. The effects of emancipation would speedily impel the proprietors to introduce steam mills, ploughs, cattle and other improvements more and more generally. New means of amassing property would thus be opened to the master: new sources of employment would be provided for the servants; and with such aids, the labor of every hundred persons, would be equivalent to that of two hundred, under the present system.

If, in the course of this process, the proprietors, being now able to accomplish with one hundred laborers, what required two hundred before, should not extend their efforts to the amount of laborers wanting employment, these surplus laborers, not being needed as hired servants on

the plantations, could be employed with the greatest advantage to the public as well as to themselves, in raising provisions, such as grain, vegetables, fruit, live stock, &c. &c. upon the waste lands, which are now unoccupied, and which form a very large proportion of the whole extent of the slave colonies.

The annual expenditure of proprictors on the new system, would not be greater than on the present, even under every disadvantage, which could in any common possibility occur; but the profits of the proprietor would be immediately and progressively increased: because

1st. He would suffer less from petty depredations.

2nd. He would be more able to obtain the extra aid, which agriculture needs on emergent occasions; and in this would be included the important advantage of having every thing done in its proper season. The slaves are generally worked the year round beyond their strength, so that on the present system, there is no proper resource for the emergencies of the seasons, or of the crops.

3rd. The land, instead of being worn out, would be improved, and rent could be obtained for much of that which is now fruitless.

4th. The proprietors would have the advantage of voluntary labor urged on by interest, want, hope, and affection; over forced labor, maddened indeed, at times, to a spasmodic exertion by fear; but habitually depressed by despondency, and rendered unproductive by a writhing and smothered sense of wrong. It is a part of the fearful infatuation of the slave system, that it first deprives a man of every right and happy motive to labor; then wondering that he is idle, with demoniac bitterness, applies the lash or the stocks, or the dungeon, or the chain!! as if the effect, which results from a cause, could be remedied by corroborating and aggravating the cause which produced it.

The negroes continually increasing, the price of labor would proportionably diminish, and facilitate the opening of new lands; cattle, &c. would be reared, and the land would revive as they multiplied.

The colonies would be safer, less expensive, and more productive; for a free and loyal population fostered by us, would throng their plains, and would be continually extending the mutual demand and supply, by which commerce prospers.

The large capital which the slave system requires for the purchase of slaves, is not needed where labor is free. This fact chills the spirit of general and useful enterprise by confining the cultivation of our slave colonies, or rather the profits of that cultivation, to a few wealthy individuals. The government, the nation at home, and the negroes abroad, being dishonored, degraded, and plundered, in order to gratify the unbending pride, and the crazy fears, and the mistaken interests of a few wealthy capitalists.

For we may observe, that wherever speculations in slave labor, as is commonly the case, are pursued on *credit*, the debtor is entangled in all his exertions; his crops are mortgaged; he must procure, at whatever expense of life to the negro, or of disadvantage to himself, the stipulated quantity of produce, and he must commit it to the stipulated agencies,—he must force the seasons if unfavorable—he loses the advantages of the market—he is driven even as he drives the poor negro—except indeed that *brutal force* urges one,—*hastening to get rich* the other,—that the poor negro sees no hope in his toil,—but the speculator in the poor negro's sweat is buoyed up for his little span by the golden lure, which still glitters brightly before him, however certainly it in general eludes his grasp and leaves him in ruin. The *fair* capitalist needs not the cruel and criminal monopoly, which the slave system affords him, in order to enhance the advantage which the possession of capital always must give over its poorer competitor.

In the United States, the northern part of Maryland is less fertile and is less favorably situated for commerce than the south; but it is cultivated chiefly by free men. Land in this part is worth twice as much as it is in the southern and more fertile division, which is cultivated by slave labor; Pennsylvania is a free State; Virginia is a slave; they adjoin one another; land of the same quality, &c. is worth twice as much in Pennsylvania as in Virginia; wages in Virginia are twice as high as in Pennsylvania; Virginia compared to Pennsylvania is a wilderness; the inhabitants of Virginia are trembling in their beds—the people of Pennsylvania rest in safety.

Kentucky and Ohio are adjoining States; Kentucky is a slave, Ohio a free State; Kentucky was well settled, when not many years ago, Ohio was still a wilderness; but now the free population of Ohio, nearly doubles that of Kentucky, both enslaved and free.

"In 1821, the colored population of Columbia (including Indians) amounted to 900,000. Of these a large number were suddenly emancipated. The effect was, a degree of docility on the part of the blacks, and a degree of confidence and security on the part of the whites, unknown in any preceding period of the history of Columbia."*

"In the parishes of St. John, Philip, and George, in Barbadoes, on a plantation of 288 slaves in June 1780, viz. 90 men, 82 women, 56 boys, and 60 girls, by the exertion of an able and honest manager, there were only 15 births, and no less then 57 deaths, in three years and three months. An alteration was made in the mode of governing the slaves, the whips were taken from all the white servants; all arbitrary punishments were abolished, and all offences were tried by a negro court. In four years and three months, under this change of Government, there were 44 births, and only 41 deaths, of which ten were of superannuated men and women, and past labor, some about eighty years old. But in the same interval, the annual net clearance of the estate, was about three times more than it had been for ten years before."†

And should it here be said, "but the negroes were still slaves;" I reply, it is true that the negroes were still slaves, *legally*, but *practically* they were free: they were secured from all arbitrary punishments; their few crimes were tried by their peers; they received wages, and freely enjoyed the fruits of their labor; they loved the locality to which they were accustomed, and had no desire to leave it.

But it is true that all these blessings depended upon an individual's humor, and circumstances, and life; and so far they were slaves; still, for the time being, they were practically free, and both they and their master richly shared for the moment, in the advantages of hired, over forced labor.

"A slave," says Adam Smith, "can have no other interest than to eat and waste as much, and work as little as he can;" and Adam Smith here speaks a plain truth of nature. Kindness, indeed, may excite affection, and cruelty may awaken terror; but the affection must be as rare as kind slave masters are, and ever must be, while man is man; and though terror may produce spasmodic energy in labor, the very spasm destroys; the driven wretch perishes in the midst of his days; and to the last verge of his daring, "he eats and wastes as much, and works as little as he can." The driver may see the velocity with which he wields his hoe, and can goad him on if he relax; but no driver's eye can trace the nerve which he puts into his hoe; the instrument moves up and down with its stated

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* Enquiries relating to Negro Emancipation. Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly. 1829. p. 77.

† See Adam Hodgson's Letter to J. B. Say. Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly. pages 24 and 25.

quickness, but it falls half powerless on the sod. The writhing and recoiling mind, in a region of its own, beyond the keenest glance of the oppressor, ever spurns to yield its vigor to brute force. Let the oppressor continue to apply the lash, and he may continue to obtain the fruit of the heartless arm; but if he wish to get the benefit of the man's vigor, he must propitiate the man's mind. Free labor does this; slave labor always refuses it.

"Some years ago, a mill-dam was carried away not far from the city of Washington, in the United States. A contractor was applied to; he pledged himself to repair it in twenty days, if allowed to provide for the negroes as he pleased. The proprietor consented; "but" said he, "you cannot do it in sixty; I am certain my negroes will not be able to do it in less." The contractor repeated his pledge and began the work; he purchased some barrels of good pork and beef, and other necessaries of life, and suitable clothes for the season and labor: he fed the negroes freely, clad them well, worked with them himself, and treated them kindly. He completed the work within the specified time; did it in a masterly manner, and secured the good will of the negroes."*

Here we may observe, and urge as an important fact, in the search after truth on this subject, that the *labor of slaves* is *not* always *slave-labor*. In the Barbadian case, and in that just mentioned, the laborers employed were slaves, but their labor was free labor; that is, although legally slaves, they were, in these instances, treated like free laborers; they were won to exertion by the same motives as those which lead free laborers to exertion; and they were free, for the time, from the degrading and destructive effects of brute compulsion. The misery of the slave, is—not that he is every moment driven to death, for then would all slaves be quickly exterminated—but that he depends for all his present comforts, and future hopes on earth, upon the humor, and the fortune, and the life of a fellow sinner; and of a fellow sinner almost always brutified in relation to him, by the demoralizing effects of despotic power. The happiness of the free laborer, is—not that he always has abundance, for he is often in want—but that he is dependant mainly upon God, and his own exertions, and that he is as honorable in the eye of the law, and is as really protected as his master is.

Slave labor is, in fact, a device for depriving the employer of all the advantages of mind in his laborer, and for reducing the productiveness of the man's toil to one half, or less, of what his mere physical strength could produce; the writhing mind always subducting the other half, maugre despotism.

But free labor is a mode, by which, whatever the man is able to perform, is performed with all the advantages of mind which he may possess, and is enhanced by the energies of a willing heart. The former is the *gain* of the man who employs free laborers; the latter is the *loss* of the man who *will* have slaves. M. Coulomb, who for many years conducted extensive military works, both in France and the West Indies, states that:

"Field slaves do only between a third and a half of the work dispatched by reluctant French soldiers; and probably, not more than a third of what those very slaves would do, if urged by their own interest, instead of brute force."†

II. *Immediate emancipation would be happy for the Negro.*

The evidence in favor of this proposition is luminously complete; but prejudice has thrown much darkness around it. The question itself has

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*Relief for West India Distress, by James Cropper. London: Printed by Ellerton and Henderson, Gough Square. 1828.

† Hodgson's Letter to Say, p. 9.

been mistated; the facts of history perverted; false arguments adduced; and thus, upon a ground altogether assumed, a congenial structure has been reared.

What is the question?

It is, whether as a general truth, it is best for him to labor for wages, which shall be his own, or to be dependent upon his master for what he shall be pleased to give him? Whether it be best for him that his wife should be independent of his employer, or should be his master's slave? Whether it be best for him to be subject to no penalty, except for his own crimes,—or to be liable to be sold for his master's debts? Whether it is best for him to be secure from punishment, until found guilty on fair and open trial,—or to be left at his master's discretion to be flogged, imprisoned, and tortured whenever his master pleases, &c.?

The question is not, whether in some cases, it would not be better for a poor man to be entirely dependent upon a kind employer, and to be entirely provided for by him; but whether, in all cases, generally, it is better for a poor man to be the subject of just and equal laws, or the slave of the humor and will of his employer?

The answer is obvious. Unfit as the man may be to be entrusted with liberty, still his happiness will be more secure, under God, in his own keeping, than in any other man's. In keeping his own liberty, he is liable to abuse it. True; but who is not subject to the same liability? and if no man were to be free, until he were secure from abusing his liberty, where would the free man be!! But liable as the poor man unquestionably is to abuse his liberty, it is a still more striking and awful truth, that the rich or the strong man, armed with despotic authority, is yet more liable to *abuse* his *power*. Who in his senses would give his son for a slave to the Turk, because his son was liable to abuse his liberty! Yet the Turks, generally speaking, are kinder slave masters than the British are. And if the British slave master excuse himself from this procedure, by saying, that he has better means of securing his son from the abuse in question, than by giving him to a Turk; who does not see, that as truly, the British slave masters have vastly better means for securing the happiness of the negroes, than by keeping them in slavery? The following facts are selected from many, to prove that immediate emancipation would be happy for the negroes.

In the year 1794, the French National Convention at once declared all the slaves in their colonies to be free. Capt. W. of Cove Cork, was at that time residing in Cayenne. Liberty was proclaimed to the slave population around him, and slavery instantly ceased. He declared to me, that there was no disorder or fear; but all flourished. The masters and the laborers were alike happy, until Buonaparte, in 1802, restored slavery there.

The case of Hayti, or St. Domingo, is still more in point, because it was on a large scale, and its history is better known; and it is important to sketch it, as it has been grossly perverted by the advocates for slavery, and the enemies of the negroes.

In the latter end of 1793, liberty was proclaimed to the slaves by the government of the island, for the purpose of extinguishing a civil war, which had been for some time raging, and which the government found itself, although aided by troops from France, unable to quell; as well as in order to resist an invasion of the English. Early in 1794 this act was confirmed by the National Convention. The emancipation of the negroes, 500,000 in a body, produced the effects desired. The civil war was extinguished; the English were expelled; and Hayti continued to flourish until 1802, when Buonaparte endeavored to restore slavery there. He was foiled. But his horrible attempt led to a second civil war, which long distracted the island, and which led to the expulsion of the whites.

It is now at peace; and a French merchant, with whom I met last winter in Belfast, and who had resided chiefly in Hayti for upwards of twenty years past, told me, that though well acquainted with Great Britain and the United States; he knew of no country, in which there were so few infractions of the criminal code, and so much general comfort, good order, kindness, and independence as in Hayti.

The late first president of the Royal Court of St. Lucia, J. Jeremie, presents to us the following contrast in facts of his own experience in St. Lucia.

"One day I visited officially a plantation in the highest order,—the cleanliness of the buildings, their perfect state of repair, the luxuriance of the crops, all that concerned the *manager's interest*, bore an appearance truly gratifying. But it was my duty to inspect the gang: *they* were wretched to a degree, all but naked, eaten up with sores, wealed with flogging, diminishing rapidly, the only exception being a fine healthy child about six years of age. And on full enquiry, all this order, all this splendor, had been purchased at their expense.

"Much about the same time, I was called on to visit another estate, which the proprietors had quitted for some years, and *for about three had left even without a manager!!* The house and buildings were in decay, the general cultivation neglected, the appearance of the property, in all respects, the contrast of the other; but that *contrast* also extended to *the gang*. The men were a stout, healthy body of laborers. Men, women, and children, were well clothed and well fed; their grounds stored with ample provisions; a mother with her nine, another with six children around her; a great grandmother with a numerous progeny, all smiling and cheerful; their cottages well wattled, the inside separated into two or three different compartments, clean to a degree, and each containing a trunk filled with good clothing and some female ornaments. Yet was this plantation in the most remote, the other in the most convenient, part of the country." p. 62.

In 1829, it became generally known in the Islands proximate to St. Lucia, that a foreign slave, upon landing in a British colony was free; and the consequence was, that in 1830, upwards of 100 made their escape and came over to St. Lucia, from Martinique. These persons were described by their governors as *incendiaries, idlers*, and *poisoners!!*

Mr. Jeremie says respecting them, page 51—2.

"When I left the colony in April last, some were employed for wages in the business they were best acquainted with; some as masons, and carpenters; some as domestics; others in clearing land, or as laborers on estates; whilst about twenty-six had clubbed together and placed themselves under the direction of a free colored man, an African—one of the persons deported from Martinique in 1824. These last had erected a pottery at a short distance from Castries: they took a piece of land, three or four cleared it, others fished up coral, and burnt lime, five or six quarried, and got the stones and performed the mason-work, the remainder felled the timber and worked it in; and the little money that was requisite was supplied, in advance, by the contractor for the church, on the tiles to be furnished for the building. This pottery was completed, a plain structure, but of great solidity, and surprising neatness. Thus had they actually introduced a new manufacture into the country, for which it was previously indebted to our foreign neighbors, or to the home market."

The evidence respecting the liberated crown slaves in the crown colonies, as the law has not been evaded or abused, is altogether delightful. It unanswerably proves that the native Africans are quite as fit for liberty as any people upon earth; and by consequence that the creole slaves, if at all improved by our management of them, are yet more fit. But if, on the contrary, they are not so fit, what are we about thus grossly to defy God, and deliberately to lie, by pretending all the time to wish to prepare them

for liberty, while we persist for our own purposes, in grinding and wasting the unoffending poor!*

The following fact is from my own experience:—

Between the years 1817 and 1822, about 150 slaves succeeded in making their escape from the United States into Upper Canada. I became more or less acquainted with them all, and found them quite equal to any class of laborers in the country. These, with many others since escaped, are now comfortably settled upon lands, the purchase of their own industry, near Malden, in the western district of Upper Canada; one of them, a man named Adams, was one of the most interesting persons with whom I have ever met.

The following illustration is given me by my friend W. T. Blair, Esq. of Cotham Lodge, near Bristol.

"It is well known that the Hottentot has been represented as the lowest of all the African tribes in the scale of humanity. He is generally considered as a type of all that is degraded in human nature; scarcely raised a degree above the level of the brute creation, and incapable of improvement.

"It is true, that when Vanderkemp first went among them, they were in a very lawless and uncivilized condition; that they knew nothing, and cared nothing about the arts and comforts of civilized life; that they lived chiefly by plunder, and were a terror to the colony. But, they have since by kindness and christian instruction, been converted into peaceable and industrious subjects.

"When I visited Bethelsdorp in 1824, there were about 2000 people on the books of the Institution. They had acquired about 2000 head of cattle, 177 horses, 240 sheep and goats, and 60 waggons, which latter is in South Africa, an expensive and valuable article of property; 300 children attended the sunday school, and there were about 60 communicants. But few carosses or sheep skin coverings (the native dress of the hottentots) were to be seen in the premises; nearly all the men were dressed in English broad-cloth, and the women in English chintzes. In 1823, or 24, they competed successfully with the English and Dutch farmers, in the neighborhood, for the conveyance of government stores from Algoa Bay to Graham's Town, and in the same year they expended 20,000 rix dollars in the purchase of British manufactures. The year I visited the station, an Auxiliary Missionary Society had been re-established amongst the Hottentots, and 300 rix dollars had been contributed by them, chiefly by small weekly subscriptions."

III. *The immediate emancipation of the negroes would be right in the government.*

This is a truth so evident, and so little disputed, that I shall dwell but briefly on it.

The chief difficulty seems to consist in the persuasion that the government is bound, on emancipating the negroes, to compensate the masters for loss, which they will suffer. Without discussing this question here, I will observe that the emancipation of the negroes, and the remuneration of their masters, are two essentially distinct things, and ought always to be kept separate. The negroes, as unoffending British subjects, have an unquestionable right to the king's protection, whether their masters be remunerated or not. If the masters can substantiate any real claim on the nation, it undoubtedly ought to be liquidated. But the claim which the negroes have upon the government, without a question is louder, and more solemn far. The one (the negro) *demands* the restoration of rights which he has never forfeited, which are his by British Law, but of

*See Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 70, Vol. iii, page 453—475, and No. 89, Vol. iv, page 453—454.

which he is deprived by wicked power; he demands security for his life, for his person, for the fruits of his toil, for his wife, and his child, and his cot. The other (the master) demands security for a portion of his money. To put the master's claim upon a par with that of the negro, is to confound all distinction between things of the most vital and unalterable importance, and things comparatively insignificant and of fluctuating value. But to set the master's claim above the negro's; the claim of the wrong doer above that of the sufferer of wrong: the claim of money, above life, liberty, wife, children, and the fair fruits of the man's own labor, is to outrage all righteousness. Unquestionably the master ought to be remunerated, whenever he can prove a just claim to remuneration. But more unquestionably far,the negro ought to be restored to his unforfeited rights as a British subject; the right of the unoffending sufferer ought to be preferred to the money of the oppressor.

The government has no right, except the right of the free-booter; the dreadful right of the strongest, to continue to permit the outrage of the poor, because the rich are afraid that they will lose some money, should that outrage be arrested. As far as the government has sanctioned or connived at negro slavery, it has sinned and has disgraced itself in the eyes of every right mind. The government has an unquestionable right to abolish the crime instantly and utterly, and as unquestionably it is the sacred duty of government to do so. Delaying, is but encouraging wrong and oppressing right. Delaying, is but bending to wickedness because it is strong, and suffering the destruction of the weak, because they are weak.

If the government would have the favor of God, or the respect of those whose respect is the respect of truth and dutifulness—if they would not teach the wicked to despise them while they flatter or to scoff and defy them to their face with impunity, as the slave party has been doing, the government must no longer tamper with this atrocious crime, but put it down firmly with the righteous arm of its lawful authority. The fundamental principles of British Law are quoted by Blackstone as follows. "Those rights which God and nature have established, and which are therefore called natural rights, such as life and liberty, need not the aid of human laws to be more effectually vested in every man than they are; neither do they receive any additional strength, when declared by the municipal laws to be inviolable—On the contrary, no human legislation has power to abridge or to destroy them, unless the owner shall himself commit some act that amounts to a forfeiture." Blackstone's Introduction, Sect. 2. And again, "Natural allegiance is such as is due from all men born within the king's dominions, immediately upon their birth. for immediately on their birth they are under the king's protection. The prince is always under a constant tie to protect his natural born subjects, in all times and in all countries. They have a great variety of rights which they acquire by being born within the king's legiance, and can never forfeit by any distance of time or place, but only by their own misbehavior." Blackstone's Rights of Persons, b. 1. c. 10.

Littleton says, 2nd Inst. chap. 2. page 141 "Malus usus abolenda est," and Coke remarks on those words, page 141 "Quia, in consuetudinibus, non diurnitas temporis, sed soliditas rationis, est consideranda." Evil customs should be abolished; because in judging them, we ought not to consider the length of time that they have prevailed, but the strength of the reason which supports them."

IV. *The immediate emancipation of the negroes would be advantageous to the nation.*

What does the immediate emancipation of the negroes mean? It means their being at once restored to their unforfeited rights as guiltless British subjects,—It means their being at once made the subjects of wise and benignant laws,—It means that their happiness, under God, should at once

be committed to their own keeping, under those laws, instead of being left to the keeping for them of others, who, from the very nature of human things, are under the most overwhelming temptations to insult, degrade, slander, abuse and oppress them. It means, that their own wants, their own interests, their own desires, and the benefit or pleasure of those whom they love, or who have been kind to them, shall become their stimulants to industry, instead of the brute force, by which they are at present goaded; and that the fruits of their own labor, instead of remaining the legalized booty of another, should become their own.

The only difficulty, in this case, arises from the idea that the negroes would not work. But abundant evidence proves that this is simply a prejudice, with no other grounds, but the oppression which produces it, or the ignorance which it deceives.

The following evidence on this subject was adduced by Mr. Pitt, in the House of Commons, in April, 1792. "The assembly of Grenada had themselves stated, "that though the negroes were allowed the afternoons of only one day in every week, they would do as much work in that afternoon, when employed for their own benefit, as in the whole day, when employed in their master's service." Now after this confession, the House might burn all its calculations relative to the negro population. A negro, if he work for himself could do double work. By an improvement then, in the mode of labor, the work in the islands could be doubled."*

And what improvement in labor can be so great, as giving the laborer a personal interest, well secured to him, in the produce of his labor; as winning his affections to the work in which he is employed!

In 1780, Kentucky was a flourishing State, and had a considerable population; the same year Ohio had scarcely thirty white inhabitants. But Kentucky was a slave State, and Ohio a free one.

In 1830, the population of Kentucky was less than seven hundred thousand, but that of Ohio was nearly one million; and land of the same quality in Ohio, was worth twice as much as in Kentucky.

In 1780, Virginia had a population of six or seven hundred thousand, New York only about four hundred thousand. But Virginia was a slave State while New York had but very few slaves.

In 1830, the population of Virginia was only about 1,211,266, of whom 469,724 were slave. But the population of New York, where there were only forty six slaves, had increased to 1,913,508.

And why was this?

Kentucky and Virginia can scarcely be surpassed in natural fertility; they are two of the garden spots of the world. In every other advantage excepting *one* they had an equal share with Ohio and New York. That one was *free labor*. Kentucky and Virginia refused it when it was at their option, and they refuse it still. Ohio and New York accepted the boon, and they are largely reaping the benefit.

A missionary and his wife, who returned from Jamaica last year, after a residence there of about fifteen years, told me at Birmingham, where I met them, that having been much acquainted with the coffee plantations of that island, they had generally found the slaves to be dismissed from their master's work about 4 p. m.; and that the difference in their gate and demeanor, before and after four, had always greatly struck him. Before four, while employed in forced labor for their masters, there was an apathy, a stupidity, a carelessness, and want of nerve, which seemed invincible, except by spasmodic terror. But as soon as they were dismissed to work for themselves, they were at once all life and activity, cheerfully hastening to the cultivation of the grounds allotted to them for rearing their own provisions.

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* Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Vol. 2, page 428.

A similar fact is affirmed in that admirable work, "The Christian Record of Jamaica, for January, 1831, No. 5, p. 13." In coffee districts, it is usual for the master to hire his people, after they have done their regular task for the day, at a rate varying from ten pence, to one shilling and eight pence for every extra bushel which they pick from the trees; and many, almost all, are found eager to earn these wages." And again, same page; "Negroes, in general, work much harder in their own grounds, than in their master's fields."

Two other evidences may suffice. The one is from a Berbice planter, Mynheer Van Rossom. The other from J. Jeremie's most interesting and instructive Essays.

Mynheer Van Rossom's testimony was given to me personally, last summer, in London, but I prefer quoting it from his own words, as contained in a memorial presented by him to his Majesty's government in behalf of the colonies, in 1831.

"I know them from experience; they are a grateful and faithful people. During the five years that I lived amongst them, I experienced so many proofs of their fidelity, love, and attachment, and above all of their gratitude, that I should be unjust to them, and untrue to myself, if I did not state it. I never had a runaway upon any of my estates. I have never been obliged to punish a slave for not doing his work, or not working enough; and the trouble I had to prevent their working on Sundays in crop time, will hardly be credited. I often remonstrated with them that it was not lawful. When, in 1817, they had once gone to the field on a Sunday morning to pick coffee, the only mode which I could put a stop to it, and prevent a repetition, was to pay them the full amount of the coffee brought home. They had worked half a day, and I gave them £65, stating to them, that I paid them the full value, as I would not be benefitted by their labor on that day."

In another place he says:—

"Dependence can be placed on them. If I keep my part of the contract, they will keep theirs."

The number of Mr. Van Rossom's negroes was about 400.

In 1822, the government of St. Lucia instituted an inquiry into the frequency of running away among slaves. The commandant at Castries, (the capital of St. Lucia,) supplied a report on the subject. He admitted the frequency of running away, and as Mr. Jeremie says, page 52,

"He accounted for it, among other causes, by the too great intimacy between slaves and the lower class of free persons; and in proof of this he offered to submit for inspection certain small plantations, often occupied by a free colored man and his wife alone, the former being either a fisherman, mason, carpenter, or sportsman; and yet, observes the reporter, 'his plantation is better cultivated, and he has more land in cultivation, than proprietors of several slaves.' 'Who then,' he adds, 'cultivated his property? Perhaps day laborers. No, he employs none; he employs runaway slaves!'"

And what does this statement prove? Clearly, that if the reporter affirmed rightly, runaway slaves, under all the depressing fears of discovery and oppression, labor well *because the fruits of their labor are immediately their own*: how much better then, if freed from those fears, and if stimulated by the still fairer hopes, which warm the bosom of the free man! Or if the reporter was in an error, that one free man and his wife, in the midst of other avocations, can do more than a slave master with several slaves. I feel indeed that I am almost insulting the understandings of my readers, in dwelling on this evidence;—and perhaps nothing but the thick darkness, which pride and prejudice have woven round a subject in itself so plain, could excuse me.

But if the evidence adduced have force, and darkness be fleeing before

the light of truth, we see that the immediate emancipation of 800,000 souls, would give the nation upwards of a million, instead of 2 or 300,000 consumers for its varied productions: the agriculture of the colonies, which is perishing, would be retrieved: the sources of insolvency, vice, sterility and ruin, which are interwoven, fundamentally, in the Negro slave system, being removed by its abolition; and every mind in the colonies being left free to bring its quota of talent and of energy into the common stock for the public good, the whole would rapidly increase in number and in wealth: character would improve; credit would be restored; enterprise, no longer reduced to a monopoly by the immense capital requisite for slave speculations, would revive; and the fertile lands, which though now rendered comparatively barren, still call our ships across the sea, restored by the willing nerve of freedom to their fertility, would soon demand a double number.

V. *The immediate emancipation of the negroes would interfere with no feelings, but such as are disgraceful and destructive.*

What are the feelings which forbid the immediate emancipation of the negroes? — that is, their being immediately made the subjects of wise and benignant laws, instead of leaving them, as they now are, the slaves of private caprice?

Not regard for the law of God, for the Divine law is the law of all righteous liberty: the express command to masters is, to give to servants that which is *just and equal*, and the part which God chooses is, "to let loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and to let the oppressed go free."

Not regard for the laws of our country,— for, as quoted in page 16, the negroes being by birth the king's subjects, are unquestionably entitled to his protection, and can never lose their right to it by any thing but by their own misbehavior.

Not respect for the Colonial Charter,— for those Charters forbid any laws, but such as are consistent with the laws of England.

Not care for our own souls,— for the cry of our brother's blood which we are shedding, is sounding louder and louder in the ears of Jehovah, against us.

Not love for our neighbor,— for who could think that a Turk loved him as himself, if he persisted in keeping him and his wife, and children, in forced bondage.

Not love for the negroes' temporal happiness.— for negro slavery continually plunders the wretched negro who is subjected to it, of almost every means of happiness.

Not a desire to educate the negro under a wise and benignant tutorage,— for, with a few exceptions, as far as depends upon the masters, the great body of the negroes remain as uneducated as their ancestors were an hundred years ago. The following illustrations may suffice.

The Jamaica Slave Law of 1696, contained the following clause: "All the owners, and the managers, and overseers of slaves, shall as much as in them lies, endeavor the instruction of their slaves, in the principles of the christian religion, to facilitate their own conversion," &c.

This clause was substantially repeated in 1788, 1816, in 1826, in 1829, and in 1831. (3rd clause.)

But in the Jamaica Christian Record, for Nov. 1830, No. 3, page 128, we have a list of twenty-four plantations, (with nearly 4500 slaves) on *one* of which only, *reading* was allowed; on *ten* of which, there was *some merely oral catechisings;* and on the remaining thirteen of which, no instruction whatever was permitted; and this is probably a fair average of our slave colonies.

The other fact is, that although the Society for propagating the Gospel, with the Bishops for its leaders, has had in its hands a slave estate in Bar-

badoes, called "The Codrington Estate," for upwards of 100 years, and actually has for its head, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the negroes on it generally continue in open fornication and adultery.

Not to prepare them for liberty,— for upwards of two hundred years, for doing so, if they had been inclined to it, the slave party declares that the negroes are not yet ready. Although the native Africans, those *savage Africans*, as the politer West Indians call them, can be landed from the captured slave ships, at once as freemen, with perfect safety, and with much benefit to the public and themselves.

I know, indeed, that the above desires are loudly *professed*. But I know as well, that they are not more loudly professed to-day than they were two hundred years ago. I know also, that the natural mind is the same now as it was then; that the imbruting influence of despotic power on the human mind, remains the same; that as stiffly as ever, we defy God, refusing to let the oppressed go free; that the condition of the negro remains essentially as wronged and as wretched as formerly; that in sinning to-day, as we persist in doing, against our unoffending black brother, we are sinning in the face of greater light, and therefore exhibiting a more awful evidence than ever of our obstinate corruption; that a thousand years has made no difference in the humbling but important truth, that "the man who trusts his own heart, is a fool;" and I therefore can see no reason at all for believing assertions, which the solemn and undeniable evidence of God and of history, has proved to be utterly delusive, in regard to truth; to be experimentally disgraceful to its assertors, and fearfully ruinous to the guiltless victims. Avarice — indolence — pride — lust, the fear of man; the pursuit of man's favor and such like, are the only feelings which are really hostile to the immediate emancipation of the negroes, and these are the feelings, which are still making this world, otherwise so lovely, even in its ruins, a great field of lust and blood, and which are filling up the pit with its victims.

VI. *Emancipation cannot be postponed without great danger.*

There is danger, in the continual deepening of the divine wrath; this is indeed despised or disbelieved; but it is not less sure, or the less dreadful. It is coming.

The greatest danger of pecuniary ruin to the masters, is essentially interwoven in the negro slave system. Bryan Edwards, one of their leaders, declared this in 1792. The Assembly of Jamaica, has since urged it repeatedly. The West India party in England, has reiterated it. Their extensive failures, and their almost universal distress, evince its force. All lotteries are disgraceful and ruinous; but negro slavery is the worst of all. It is a lottery in the oppression and blood of the poor. Determining at all risks to be rich, "its dupes fall into temptations, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 *Tim.* vi. 9. With giant strides they have ruined, and are ruining themselves; and then, like gloomy and disappointed idiots, they scowl at every one who will not flatter their madness; or who endeavors to bring them to repentance, and to rescue from their iniquitous grasp, even by the wisest and the kindest means, the unoffending poor.

But passing by the manifold details of my position, I wish particularly to point out the following awfully impending sources of danger, which are increasing with every day's delay.

Who does not know, that knowlege and slavery are incompatible? The one cannot flourish, without destroying the other. But progress in knowledge is inseparable from every species of amelioration. Tell of a plan of gradual emancipation, without improving the negroes in knowledge, and you tell of your own folly. Speak of preparing the negroes for liberty, without cultivating their minds, and you render your proposition unworthy of all regard. But every step in knowledge nerves the arm, and whets the sword of the wronged, for the recovery of his plundered and

unforfeited rights. "Timely reform," it is well said, "is reconciliation with a friend. Reform delayed, is capitulation to an enemy."

Whatever might be the result of immediate emancipation, by the wise and parental authority of government, the result of emancipation wrought out by the negroes for themselves, would unquestionably reek with blood.

On the gradual system, increasing numbers are continually getting free. The more benignant, and consequently the more worthy of regard, that system may be, the greater are those numbers: but they do not get their parents, wives, and children freed with them. "What kind of a woman was your mother," said a slave master some years ago, in a familiar mood, to a fine African boy whom he had purchased. The poor boy's heart writhed beneath the associations awakened: "Come, tell me," said the white man who regarded the black man as a brute, only fit to be enslaved and insulted; "what kind of a woman was she; was she tall, was she thin, was she old, was she beautiful?" The boy's glistening eyes arose, and in broken accents he said, "how could a mother but be beautiful in the eyes of her child!!" These increasing crowds of free men, eminent as far as our slave system has not destroyed the characteristic, for filial dutifulness, see and hear the brutal wrongs, which their loved and honored ones are suffering. They know, for they have felt, that slavery is no bed of roses; that consuming one's strength by force, for another's benefit, is no pleasant toil; that licentious power, backed by opportunity, is not a fictitious terror; their souls writhe within them at the nameless wrongs to which their parents, wives, and children, are still subjected. Their number and intelligence; their wealth and power continually and unavoidably increasing, give energy to the fire which is burning within them; every feeling of the human heart, which excites to resistance and to retaliation, rankles more and more deeply, and they are only waiting the climax and the opportunity, to sweep away the accursed remnants of the slave system, in the blood of its unrelenting perpetrators.

Immediate emancipation is a certain remedy, and it is the only remedy at once righteous in principle, and safe in fact. Delays are dangerous.—Delay in duty, that is, in what is morally right, is criminal as well as dangerous. The Almighty, as the American Jefferson, so solemnly and so truly said half a century ago, in relation to negro slavery in the United States, "has no attribute, which can take side with us, in such a contest!"

If these things be so; if the immediate emancipation of the negroes, would be safe and profitable to the masters, and happy for themselves: if it would be right in the government and advantageous to the nation: if it would interfere with no really honorable and upright feeling, and if it cannot be postponed without continually increasing danger, two or three striking questions arise.

1st. Why do not the slave party see it? they have many men of high talent, who are sensible and well informed, and some of whom, in other things, are of remarkable benevolence. Why do not they see and act upon the fact, if it be so?

I answer, some of them, though few, *do* see it; and some of them, though *fewer still*, have acted upon it, and of course have ceased to be slave masters; but the slander, and the opposition, and the violence, and the scorn which it provokes from the rest, embarrass their measures, and largely prevent the delightful fruit which would otherwise arise. This is an evil, which government alone can remedy.

But the great body of them do not see it, because their minds, however bright and honorable in other things, are perfectly imbruted towards the negro. They have so long seen him in the posture of a slave, and with the attributes of a slave, that they deem it a jest or an insult, to represent the negro to them in his real character, as a brother man, more honorable, because less guilty than they themselves are; as their unoffending and oppressed fellow subjects, entitled quite as much as they to the king's pro-

tection, and suffering wrongs from them, manifold more aggravated than the worst of those which their fears conjure up from the nation, and in view of which, bugbear as they are, they are half assuming the attitude of treason. They overlook the obvious fact, that the crime is their own, and they blame and traduce the poor negro, because he is suffering the effects of the wrongs which they inflict upon him. They will not open their eyes to see, that the character which the negro exhibits under their bondage, is the character which that bondage almost inevitably produces, and is as different from his own, as the feelings of the freeman differ from those of the slave. Some years ago, a Friend residing near the borders of Virginia, heard that a negro of the most hardened character was thrown into prison as a last resource; "not all the promises or all the terrors of his master," said they, "can make any thing of him; he seems to laugh at flogging, and at chains, and death; he is always thieving, always lying, always idle." The Friend, with two or three others, went to see him; the negro seemed to have made up his mind for defiance, and sat gloomily and contemptuously before them. They sought to get at his heart, but long he heeded them not; at length, when they were about to give him up in despair, a fibre was suddenly smitten; "massa," said he, "you know no'ing 'bout dat; you get me free, den you see, what kind man I." They easily purchased him, for he was a nuisance rather than of any value to his master; and he immediately proved himself, and continued to prove himself, one of the most dutiful and industrious men, that the Friend ever knew. But the great body of the slave party are so imbruted in all their feelings towards the negroes, that they will not and cannot see the broad and delightful truth which this bespeaks; and they persist in ruining themselves, and wasting the negro by vainly endeavoring to obtain by force, what equity and love would at once obtain without sin or difficulty. Their minds are in the same posture in relation to the negro, as the mind of the drunkard is in relation to his liquor, or of the adulterer in relation to his lusts. They see the negro, slavish, artful, thievish, and idle, *as a slave*. They *will* have it, that as *a freeman*, he would be the same; and therefore, with all the *wisdom* of *infatuation*, they persist in keeping him a slave, in order to prepare him for liberty; they *will* retain him in the condition which has, in a great measure forced him to be slavish, idle, thievish, and artful, in order to teach him to be independent, industrious, honest, and open. This fact could scarcely be more strikingly exhibited, than it is in the following words of the assembly of Jamaica, in their decision of December 14, 1827.

"The whip is not forbidden in the field, lest the abandonment too suddenly, of a long established usage, should be misunderstood by the slaves. * * * *Until Negro women* have acquired more of the sense of shame, which distinguishes European females, it will be impossible in respect to them, to lay aside altogether, punishment by flogging, there being no substitute that promises to be accompanied with the same salutary dread."

Or in the following quotation from the Antigua Free Press of Friday, June 8th, 1827.

"On the first introduction of the Slave Code into Trinidad, the abolition of the whip, in the punishment of female slaves, coming suddenly on the Planter, unprovided with the authorized means of coercion, was the cause of great relaxation of discipline, and frequent disorders occurred. But the application of the hand and feet stocks has proved fully effectual for the punishment of refractory or insolent slaves; and at this period, the females are maintained in as perfect order and subordination as the males. These stocks, confining the hands and feet, by which the body is kept in a position, that at length becomes almost insupportable, are allowed by law to be applied for six hours; but the severity of the punishment has proved so great, that few planters will go to the extent autheriz-

ed; and the female who has *once tasted* of its *salutary* bitterness, has seldom any inclination to try a second dose!!"

Such is the wisdom, and such are the contrivances of the great body of the Negro Slave Masters. Such are the modes, by which they seek to enrich themselves, and to *prepare the Negroes for liberty;* and such is the condition, in which they would have us contentedly leave our guiltless fellow subjects in the slave colonies; till women, by indecent exposures, and brutal floggings, are taught modesty; or by stretching on the stocks of Trinidad, are inspired with respect for the authorities above them, and with cheerful industry!!! The simple reason why a man who keeps his eyes fast closed, cannot see, even while the day is pouring upon him, is because he will not open his eyes.

2nd. The Planters surely love their own pecuniary interests. The negroes are actually their property. To oppress and destroy the negroes, would be to destroy their own property; and how can we believe, that shrewd men like the Planters, fully awake to their own pecuniary interests, could act so irrationally?

On our post roads of Britain, the Post Masters love their money as well as the West India Planters do. The post horses are their own property. Yet, who does not know that, in seasons of competition especially, the poor horses are driven beyond their strength, and often killed? Negro slavery is an intense competition of ardent rivals, driving against each other. The driven animal, as in other cases, is the sufferer. The driver also very frequently suffers, betrayed by the lust of gold. This is eminently the case with the slave party. In their horrible lottery of avarice, and lust, and blood, nine out of ten are ruined. They are driving them to destruction as fast as they can. But they resolutely shut up their senses against the blaze of evidence which demonstrates this fact; and while they go on railing at the government; and at the friends of humanity; and at the poor negroes—and even at the blessed missionaries of the cross; they are continually deepening their guilt and their ruin. God says to them, "Steal no more." "Yes, yes," they reply; "we wo'nt steal a man's coat; but we must steal his reputation, his wages, and his liberty." "Let the oppressed go free," says God. "That we wo'nt," says the Negro Slave party. "The way of transgressors is hard," saith the Lord. "Oh *that*," they cry, "is the fault of the sufferers, and their friends." God opens to them the pleasant way of love and holiness. But they hate that pleasant way, and sting themselves to death, while they are wasting the unoffending poor, and abusing every one who does not sympathize with them in their wickedness.

Few, comparatively, of the Negro Slave proprietors are managers. The actual authorities, generally in charge of the poor negroes, are hirelings, and have no other interest in them, than to wring out of them as much labor, year by year, as possible. With these men interest concurs with passion and opportunity, in wasting the negro.

Of the few proprietors who are managers, very few indeed, are completely solvent. Overburdened, generally, with debt, and deeply mortgaged, they are under pecuniary engagements of the heaviest kind, to obtain, harvest by harvest, a stated quantity of produce, and to consign it to the stipulated agencies. However much they may compassionate the negroes, or be awakened to their own *permanent* interests, they have no alternative but immediate ruin, (as they deem ruin) or the fulfilment of their pecuniary engagements. The poor negro is the machine by which, season after season, the bond is solved; and that bond can only be solved, as the admirers of slave labor are persuaded, by exacting from him by force, whatever amount of exertion is requisite for its solution.

Interest, worldly interest I mean, is dear to man; it is like his right hand. But passion is dearer still. It is the apple of the eye. He will

sacrifice body and soul for his money. But he will sacrifice body and soul, and money too, for the gratification of his passions. What tongue could utter the loathsome and bloody abominations of negro slavery in this particular? The mind of the despot, in relation to the negro, is doubly seared. He outrages his brother, and rushes proudly to his own ruin, even as the war horse plunges into battle.

3. But here is a difficulty.

A man has purchased an estate in the West Indies of the value of £20,000. The enslaved British subjects on it, estimated at one half, or £10,000: the lands and works at the remainder.

He has a sudden call to convert his property into money, or he dies, and his executors are required to do the same, for the benefit of legatees. Now, while such a sale is in progress, or before it can be completed, if all the enslaved British subjects in the slave colonies were restored to their freedom, would not such property be largely depreciated, and would not the person in question sustain a heavy loss?

I reply, the case is an extreme one. Such cases might occur, but they would certainly be rare; and even on the low ground of political expediency, the exception can never form the rule. It is unquestionably better, in every sense, that a few criminal individuals should suffer a pecuniary loss, than that hundreds of thousands of innocent people, should continue bereaved of all that is most unalienably the real property of man, and of all that is fundamentally dearest to every right feeling of the human heart.

But will such a loss arise? let us fairly see.

Every body knows, that land of itself is worth little or nothing for human purposes. All, or almost all its value, depends upon the means of cultivating it. In a slave society, like that of Jamaica, as few or no laborers, except such as are enslaved can be procured for the purpose of cultivating land, the value of landed property rests eminently upon the number of enslaved laborers attached to it; and this must continue as long as slavery continues. But if the slaves were freed, what would be the result? There would at once be in Jamaica between three and four hundred thousand free laborers, dependant under God for the daily bread of themselves and families upon their own labor. Every one who had land, could get a portion of them. The value of land, which had largely gone over to the slaves, because none but the slaves could be got to cultivate it, would immediately revert to the land itself, because now its cultivation would be secured by free labor, without the waste of capital, and the overwhelming responsibilities of the slave system. This reversion of the value of the land, to the land, would be immediate in a measure; it would necessarily increase with rapidity, and very soon, as is now the case in Maryland and elsewhere, the land and buildings alone, would be worth as much, without a single slave, as the same land and buildings now are, with all their outraged and unoffending poor.

If the necessity, supposed in the case, were imperious and instant, so that the persons concerned could not without guilt, delay the sale, beyond the day immediately following the emancipation, it is probable some loss would be sustained. But not so much as the slave share of the purchase, because every one would immediately know, that the land was not valuable without slaves. But this is a case doubly extreme. The common necessities of sale, could clearly be postponed under such circumstances, for a reasonable time, and little or no loss need arise. For myself I am fully persuaded, that sales would early be effected, vastly more profitable to the venders, than now could take place, or than ever can take place again, while we continue to defy God, by refusing to let his poor go free.

They who can deem the risk of a portion of the money of a few, in a case scarcely to be supposed; and that money, the money of the wrong-doers; as of more value than the unforfeited right of the sufferer of wrong

to his property in his own person, and in his own righteous liberty and earnings, may be stumbled at this difficulty if they please. I leave them, with an earnest intreaty to study solemnly and prayerfully, the 58th chaptor of Isaiah, and the beginning of the 5th of James.

But why don't the Government do its duty, and at once abolish this atrocious system?

The only reasons that I can see, are, 1st. That Slave Masters are members of the Government. And what, with this cancer in its bosom, and the dreadful influence of the Slave party without; pervading as it does, almost every corner of our empire, and holding often the highest in its trammels,—the Government, however willing, has not been able alone. And 2ndly. That the nation, by purchasing and consuming the produce of the Slave Colonies, at once supports Slavery, and unnerves all its efforts, and all its petitions against it. It is building up with both hands, what it is calling upon others to pull down.

Two or three brief observations may be added.

If the negroes be fit for liberty, there is no excuse, but such as felons use, for keeping them in bondage.

If the negroes be not fit for liberty, the fault must be in our negro slave system; since it is undeniable, that the native Africans can at once be landed from the captured slave ships, as free men, the subjects of law, with the most perfect safety to the public and themselves.

If we would keep them slaves, in order to prepare them for liberty, where shall we find right agents for the evolution of our *benevolent* purpose? The West India planters have always been an honorable body. They have had the negroes in their hands for nearly three centuries; and they themselves declare that the negroes are not yet prepared. There is another body, more honorable still, the Bishops with His Grace of Canterbury at their head, who have had a slave estate, (Codington's Estate, Barbadoes,) for upwards of a hundred years in their possession, and by their own last report, published but a few months back, the negroes on it were not yet fit for liberty.

Where could we find better agents? Or can present or future slave masters be more wisely trusted with the liberties of their unoffending fellow subjects than those that are passed; while still they remain men, and the dreadful influences of despotic authority retain the same power as ever over the human heart? Which of us, that has a father's spirit, could be willing that our child, imbruted by Turkish bondage, should remain in bondage to the Turk, that his Turkish master might prepare him for liberty before he set him free? And what difference is there between this case and ours, except that a Bible is more guilty than a Koran land, where it wrongs its unoffending brother!

OUTLINE FOR IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION.

A Parliamentary enactment, abolished at once and altogether, the Negro Slave system, throughout the British dominions.

This should be transmitted, immediately after its completion, with all requisite authority, to the slave colonies; and, at the conclusion of the few days which might be requisite to prepare for its promulgation, it ought to be promulgated and put in force.

The negroes should remain amenable to the common Statute Laws of Great Britain, together with such local regulations, as might be suitable in their recovered capacity, as free and righted British subjects.

All compulsory labor will be at an end, except for crime, by fair course of law, and equitable wages will be the stimulus, and the reward of the negro's toil.

All great and sudden changes, being liable to difficulties from the very nature of the human mind, the change which we are now contemplating,

should be no greater than duty requires—and therefore, while duty is satisfied, by converting the slave of private and irresponsible caprice, into the subject of public and equitable authority, such regulations should be enacted, as might best provide for the public good, on the righteous basis of equal law.

A public provision should be made for the maimed and incurably diseased negroes.

All difference in law, on account of color, to be abolished.

The details of this outline can be filled up, only by the proper authorities. All that seems wanting for its completion is,—

That the negro slave party should open their eyes, and cultivate, instead of destroying, both their own interests, and the unoffending poor.

That whether the negro slave party will open their eyes or not, the government should do its duty, by at once and totally abolishing this atrocious crime, leaving the pecuniary question between the criminals to be settled by due course of law.

That in order to give the government the strength which it needs on this subject, the people should more and more urgently and numerously petition.

That in order to give their petitions all their force, the people should abstain from slave produce, as far as possible, and especially from that dreadful article, slave sugar, which adds slaughter to slavery.

And, as each individual's duty is perfectly independent of the concurrence or opposition of others, that each individual should be faithful unto death, in doing all that he can in a christian temper and a christian manner, towards obtaining immediate obedience to the divine command, to "let the oppressed go free."

Should it yet be said—But why not leave the matter to government? I reply,

1st. The measures still pursuing by government, are fundamentally the same as those pursued since 1823; that is, they continue either to leave legislation for the benefit of the oppressed, to the discretion of their oppressors; or they aim at the mitigation, instead of the extinction of crime. While the government has been dallying over these measures, exposed to the scoffs, and the insults, and the almost treasonous opposition of the slave party, upwards of 30,000 of our unoffending fellow subjects have been deliberately slaughtered in cold blood; and upwards of 200,000 have died in slavery; and are prepared with all their unredressed wrongs about them, to meet us at the bar of God. From 1824 to 1831, between 4000 and 5000 yearly destroyed in sugar. The natural deaths, in the same period, amongst 800,000, must have been at least 200,000.

2nd. The half-way measures of the British government, and the liberty which it has taken to connive at the *actual continuance* of the great crime of negro slavery, while it has been feebly aiming at its *future extinction*, have encouraged other nations in their wickedness. Crime, to be prevented, must be deprived of countenance; and the temptations which lead to it, must be removed. Immediate emancipation, under wise and benignant regulations, would do this: but half-way measures countenance the crime, and supply it with temptation.

3rd. The act of legislature, which shall substitute the dominion of wise and equitable laws, for that of private and irresponsible caprice, will be more easy of execution, than any merely ameliorating acts can be. In the former case, legislature will be simple, uniform, and just; and the interests of all parties being fairly consulted, the interests of all will harmonize. But, in the latter, legislation itself exceedingly complicated, will have to contend with a discordant mass of hostile and repellent powers. Each plantation will remain, as it is, a little "imperium in imperio," at variance with the supreme government, and in a state of smothered warfare within

itself; the interests, as he deems them, of the master, on the one side, being, from the very nature of things, at irreconcilable variance, with the interests on the other, of the oppressed negro, and of the nation, disgraced by the poor man's wrongs.

4th. The discordances of legislation, introduced into our slave colonies, by the various sources, British, Spanish, French, Dutch, Pirate, &c. from which we have derived them, will present a labyrinth of legalized subterfuge and impediment, beyond all possibility of efficient correction, by mitigating measures; and amidst the mazes of which, "*Negro Slavery*," may safely crouch, crying out "*Amelioration*," and despising the cries of the negro's blood; as long as the gradual system, with its half policies, vacillating between right and wrong, continues to afford it covert.

5 h. But let the simple, wise and equitable dominion of British law, be substituted by the supreme authorities of the state, for the negro slave system; and at once, the otherwise insuperable difficulties which now oppress us, will disappear: the wickedness which is a lion in the face of indecision, is a lamb when confronted by duteous energy; and truth, and love, and lawful liberty, will take place of avarice, tyranny, and lust, and blood. Policy will be succeeded by wisdom. Temporising between right and wrong, will be supplanted by decision in right; and our eight hundred thousand enslaved and outraged negro fellow-subjects, will no longer blazon our inconsistency and hypocrisy over the world, whenever we boast of our liberty.

APPENDIX.—ON COMPENSATION.

In Negro Slavery, there are two parties.—The wrong doers, and the sufferers of wrong.

Whatever may become of the wrong doers, the sufferers clearly ought not to continue to be wronged.

The wrong doers consist of two classes. 1st. The Negro Slave party; that is, every body who has, or rather, who thinks he has, any direct interest in the continuance of the outrage. And, 2nd. The rest of the nation.

The beginning of this outrage, was the crime of the Negro Slave party. Sir John or Captain Hawkins, by imposing upon his sovereign, and by making himself a merchant in the liberties and blood of his unoffending fellow men, for sake of lucre, was its infamous founder. (I speak of Great Britain only.)

At a subsequent period, the Government, to its everlasting disgrace, threw itself into the enterprise, and took a dreadful lead; but even then, in the height of its guilt, the Government retained a degree of integrity.—In the debate of 1792, as quoted by Clarkson, vol. ii, p. 433, adducing Act 23. Geo. II. c. 31.

"No master of a ship trading to Africa, shall by fraud, force or violence, or by any indirect practice whatever, take on board, or carry away from that coast, any negro, or native of that country, or commit any violence on the natives, to the prejudice of the said trade; and every person so offending, shall, for every such offence, forfeit £100." Mr. Pitt adds, "But the whole trade had been demonstrated to be a system of fraud, force, and violence; and therefore, the contract was daily violated, under which the parliament allowed it to continue."

And who were the violators? Not the nation or the government, but the negro slave party!

Virginia and Jamaica, it is true, petitioned for the abolition of the African Slave Trade; and the government rejected their petition. But the motives for the petition and for its rejection, were of one stamp. Both were alike sordid,—and in moral estimation, are records, not of praise, but of infamy.

When, at a subsequent period, the African Slave Trade was acknowledged by government to be what it always had been, *felony*, and was abolished by law, the negro slave party clave only the more firmly to their idol, his hideous parent, *Colonial Slavery*, which, in the nature of things, is equally *felony*; and for many years past, they have been resisting alike the influence of the government, the remonstrances of the nation, the voice of humanity, and the commands of God, in support of their destructive system. All that talent, wealth, high connections, union, energy, lust, pride, prejudice, selfishness, deluded passion, and perverted judgment, could do, to

support the outrage, has been done by them; through their influence, chiefly, this intolerable disgrace still rankles in our bosom. I say, chiefly—not entirely—because, by purchasing and consuming their produce, especially their bloodbought sugars, we continue to purchase and encourage the crime.

These facts should be always kept in mind, when we discuss the subject of Compensation. I speak of them in a general sense, disregarding the exceptions; and in this sense, I proceed to observe:

1st. If the criminal, however sanctioned by legal wickedness like his own, have no just claim to compensation, when arrested in his iniquity; then the plunderers of the rights, and the destroyers of the lives of their guiltless fellow subjects, will have no such claim, if a lawful stop be put to their cruel and destructive system.

2nd. If compensation be due to the sufferers of wrong, and not to the perpetrators of it, *then*, all the compensation is due to the oppressed.

3d. If compensation for loss never can be due, till the fact of loss, and an equitable claim be substantiated; no compensation can be due, in the case before us, till the proof of such loss is supplied, and a just claim to remuneration be established.

4th. If the compensation claimed, be a claim of equity, that claim must have the support of the Divine law. But every principle of the Divine law, is against the claim in question here, as far as relates to keeping the unoffending negroes another moment in bondage.

5th. If it be a political claim, it must be supported by political rights. But, in the present case, the British law is fundamentally adverse to it. The charters of the Slave Colonies do not support it. The British character loathes it. Customs inherited from pirates, and a law of custom, worthy of pirates only, together with Colonial Statutes, defining its existing enormities, are its sole grounds—its sandy, yet terrible foundation.

6th. If it be a commercial claim, it must be sanctioned by the established principle of commerce. But every merchant exposes himself to all the reverses which may meet him in his speculations. When he has had sufficient warning, he is doubly without a claim. And when his speculations partake of robbery and murder, all that he has a right to claim, is the robber's and the murderer's meed.

7th. If it be a claim to benevolence, it must make out a case of distress, not the result of the claimant's own obstinacy in wickedness. In the case before us, the case of general distress seems amply made out; but the evidence is still more ample, that this distress is entirely the result of the dreadful infatuation in sin of the claimant; that he has the remedy within his power; and that nothing, but his own unbending wickedness, has prevented, or now prevents the remedy.

8th. If the claim pretend to any degree of rectitude, it must be compatible with the equal or superior rights of others. But this seems entirely overlooked by the slave-masters, in their "a priori" claims for compensation. So sordidly selfish are their views, that no evidence can be traced, in any of their proceedings, of their having the least remembrance, that the negroes whom they oppress, are their brother men, entitled, by the law of their God, to their love: that the poor negroes, whose liberties they are plundering, and on whose plundered wages they are living, are their fellow subjects, and have a better claim to the king's protection, than they themselves have: that the oppressed negroes have suffered wrongs from them, and from the nation, which worlds of gold, and ages of holy and undissembling love, could not repay.

9th. If the claim demand a sum of money, equal to the full existing value of the negro, *this* and *more* than this, the claimants have already received. The oppressed negroes themselves, have amply paid it, by the net profits of their toil. The only difference is, that if the nation had paid it, they would have received it, all at once, in the mere sum, of £24,000,000; esti-

mating, in round numbers, that there are 800,000 of our fellow subjects thus oppressed in the Colonies, and that the price of each of these, upon an average, is £30. Whereas, receiving it, as they have done, by daily instalments, they have received a large addition in compound interest. Here let it also be observed, that the nation is already two hundred millions out of pocket by the Slave Colonies; and that in any legal balancing of pecuniary accounts, this fact must be estimated.

10th. Whether, however, we reject or admit the claim of compensation, the most convincing arguments, alike of theory and of fact, are not wanting to prove, that the advantages of free labor, would greatly increase the value of the estates, so as in a short time, to render the land alone worth as much as land and negroes both together now are; and would greatly improve the income of the proprietors. And these arguments are so conclusive, that it would be much more reasonable for the slave masters to purchase beforehand, from the nation, the advantages of immediate emancipation, by an advance of millions, than it would be in the nation to pay beforehand, for an apprehended loss, which there is abundant reason to believe will never arise.

Still, the claim is boldly and loudly reiterated. Here is what may be further said.

The quantity of produce on each plantation is annually sworn to for internal taxation, in the slave colonies.

The quantity of exported produce, is, or ought to be, duly recorded in passing through the Custom House.

The number of enslaved British subjects on each plantation, is annually sworn to, for internal taxation.

The same thing is done triennially, stating age, sex, &c. for the three yearly returns to the supreme Government.

The books of each plantation contain lists of all the enslaved British subjects on the plantation, with their various employments, &c.

On these and other data, means of accurate information are always at hand. With respect to the effect of making the negroes at once the subjects of wise and benignant laws, instead of leaving them the slaves of private caprice, the negro slave party, and the rest of the nation, that is, the two parties of criminals, are at variance. The negro slave party, *will* have it, that a man labors most profitably for his employer, when compelled to do so, whether he likes it or not. The rest of the nation is equally confident, that willing labor stimulated by the laborer's own wants, and interests, and affections, must always be the most profitable for all parties.—The negro slave party, insisting on *their* view, scream out against us, as if we were going to ruin them, by giving them *voluntary*, instead of *forced* labor; and demand compensation for loss, before they have sustained any. The nation can see in their clamour, nothing but the infatuation which characterizes the whole of their dreadful system. The negro slave party rejoin, "but you are our accomplices, and you ought to bear your share of the loss." The nation says, "where is the loss? There will not be a negro less in Jamaica; the land will not fly away. The militia, which is chiefly composed of the free colored and black people, are loyal. The national troops will not become less numerous or brave. Our ships will be as fleet in crossing the sea. The laws will only change, by being converted from a system, worthy only of pirates, into a system of benignity and equal handed justice. Love and gratitude, and a sense of lawful security in property and person, certainly will not be a less efficient curb, than a system of legislation, which wrongs all real right, and stimulates its sufferers more and more fiercely to revenge, and madness, and despair.—Where is the loss? says the nation, we can see none. It is true, that we have been your accomplices in this attrocious crime, but our guilt is a reason, not for continuing, but for abolishing it: neither should we be justi-

fiable in remaining your accomplices, because you still prefer your money or your pride, to the rights of your unoffending fellow subjects; rights the most sacred which man can have on earth; rights which they have never forfeited; rights, which for the time being, are entrusted to our care, and to which, they have a claim more sacred far, than you have to the comparative dross, the fear of losing a portion of which, almost maddens you.—Where is the loss? We are not going to take from you your laborers, or any lawful power over your laborers; we are only going to deprive you of the power of insulting, and polluting, and plundering, and abusing them, with impunity. We are only going to remove from you, a temptation to wrong, too great for man to bear. We are not going to give you the labor of a brute of the same physical strength, instead of the labor of a man; but we are going to restore to the man whom you have imbruted, the mind, which alone can give to his physical strength, all its efficiency, and this efficiency will be left with you; his physical strength, which force could not bring out, but which, from the very nature of the human mind, force blighted, will be restored to you, not only with all its animal energy fully developed, but enhanced by all the powers of mind of which he may be master. Where then, we say, is the loss?" "Oh, we are sure that we shall suffer a loss," say the slave party; "and as our money, or rather a portion of it, is of much more importance than our God, or our king, or our country, or our souls, we must have money, before the oppressed shall be let go free." "We have sinned too long already," replies the nation, "in sharing and in suffering your guilt. Rulers from God, are 'a terror to evil doers,' and not their accomplices. We dare no longer defy Him, by continuing to keep you company. The king's subjects must not be left the slaves of the king's subjects. The law which has been outraged, must be restored without delay to its integrity. The oppressed must be let go free. This is our first duty; and it is a duty perfectly separate from the balancing and settling of the vile accounts which we, the wrong doers, have between ourselves. But as we cordially agree, that having been your accomplices in the crime, should the fulfilling of our first and great duty in this particular, subject you to inequitable loss, we ought to bear a fair portion of the penalty; you have only to assert and substantiate your claim to compensation, as soon as you have really suffered a loss; and we pledge ourselves not to be wanting in justice to you. The data already enumerated, together with other evidences, will always amply supply us with the means of coming to a fair decision. The question of letting the oppressed go free, and of restoring to His Majesty's unoffending subjects, the unforfeited rights of which they have been so long and so criminally deprived, is one thing. This must be first and independently set at rest. The question of mutual duty between the wrong doers, is another thing. And the proper time for discussing it, will be, when any claim is peaceably advanced and supported openly, and fairly and lawfully established by either party of the criminals against the other."

Suppose, then, that our wishes were accomplished!

Suppose that the government should cease to defy and mistrust God: and that in its deliberate wisdom, as God's minister, it should to-morrow enact a law, at once abolishing the whole slave system, and instituting in its place, a law, worthy of free and Bible-England. Suppose that the unoffending and loyal negro, should thus at once be restored to the king, whose subject he is; and be delivered from the despot of the plantations, whose slave is not for a moment, except by laws and customs, which are the stain and the curse, even of the pirate. Suppose, I say, that this were done; and that it were accompanied with every truly wise and righteous precaution; for this, *and this only*, is what we are urging. What would be the difference?

Let us take Jamaica for our example.

Would God keep it less firmly on its watery bed, because now the laborer there, was no longer plundered of his wages; and because the master now no longer stiffened his neck against his God, or hardened his heart against his brother? Who can believe it?

What would be the difference?

Would the lands assume a double sterility, because the causes which are producing their sterility, were removed? Would the land, which refuses to yield its strength to the nerveless and heartless arm of the slave, become doubly barren, beneath the cordial arm of the freeman?

Would the master whose beauteous fields are of no use to him, without labor, keep them waste, and ruin himself with two-fold rapidity, merely because he hated free labor, and still hankered after the long idolized lusts of slavery? Would he make a wilderness about him, where, amidst the unfettered developements of every holy and tender affection, he might, if he would, make a paradise?

What would the master want?—He would want laborers. Where could he get them?—From the emancipated negroes only.

Would he not rather leave his lands waste, and ruin himself, than hire them?—It cannot be supposed.

But would it not cost him more, to hire free laborers, than it does to keep slaves?—Certainly not; for it is clearly ascertained, that hired laborers, always, as a general rule, cost less than slave laborers. How do you prove this?—By the existing fact in our own colonies.

We have free-sugar colonies; and we have slave-sugar colonies. Our free-sugar colonies are at the distance of 15,000 miles from us. Our slave-sugar colonies are only about 5,000. This greater distance imposes upon our free-sugar, a freight, &c. double or treble that which is upon our slave-sugar. In addition to this, there is a heavier duty, by 8 shillings per cwt. upon our free, than upon our slave-sugar. Yet soft, free-sugar, of the same quality and fineness, from 7*d.* a pound, upwards, may be had as cheap as slave. That is, free labor, is actually in our own colonies, so much cheaper than slave labor, that free labor sugar can bear a double or treble freight, and a heavier duty, by nearly a penny a pound, than slave-sugar: and yet be sold as cheap in our markets.

But how do you account for this?

In working an estate by slave labor, the slaves must be purchased.—Say 300 slaves. The average price, we will estimate at £30 per slave.—Here, then, at the outset, is an expense of £9,000. But this expense is entirely saved, upon the free-labor system.

These 300 slaves are of all descriptions; young and old; sick and well; weak and strong; men and women. One third of 100 of them at most, are efficient laborers; another third, perhaps, may yield some profit; but one third must be unprofitable, provided they are treated with any degree of liberality. A large proportion of the slaves, therefore, although a great capital has been sunk in their purchase, must be a dead weight. But this need not be the case, and generally is not the case with a single free laborer, although nothing has been sunk to obtain him.

The fact is, that the slave master, by his infatuated system, after sinking an immense capital, has to support a large proportion of unprofitable laborers; while, even out of those that are profitable, he does not, and cannot get half their strength; the slave, as a law of human nature, "eating and wasting as much, and working as little as he can." But the proprietor, by free labor, is exempt from all this. He sinks no capital in order to obtain his laborers. He keeps no laborers, but such as he actually wants; and generally speaking, he gets out of all whom he employs, the cheerful product of their strength.

But would the emancipated negroes work? Why should they not?

They will have nothing but their labor, under God, to depend upon.—

They will have no house of their own; no land of their own; no money of their own. Why should they not labor?

They generally love with devotion, the habitations to which they have been accustomed. Sir William Young, formerly Governor of Tobago, says, "The Creole slave is attached to his place of birth and home, as strongly as Goldsmith's peasantry, wandering from the Deserted Village." Their native character is eminently yielding, submissive, and grateful.—They love superfluities and finery, as much, at least, as other men. Why should they not labor?

They must labor, or leave their abodes, so dear to them, in spite of slavery and suffering. They must labor or starve. They must labor or see their mothers, wives, and children perishing. Why should they not labor?

The question is absurd.

Of course they would labor,—and labor well; and while their labor, being free and cheerful, would not consume themselves, its willing vigor would yield a double or treble profit to their employers.

But the slave masters say, that we are going to take their property from them.

What do they mean?

Do they mean that we are going to take their negroes from them? If they do, they are under a mistake; we do not even think of taking their negroes from them.

What do you purpose then, say they, by emancipating our negroes?

We mean merely to take from you, the legalized power of abusing and wronging them with impunity.

But would not *that* be taking them away from us?—certainly not.

How do you prove it?

The value of your negro to you, consists of three several divisions. 1st. The money which is sunk in his price and in his keeping. 2nd. His labor, and 3d. The value which you could get for him, should you sell him. The first of these actually produces nothing to you, but is a heavy drawback. The second, viz. his labor, is your only present profit. And the third, is merely a security for interest to come.

Now what must be the effect upon these several relations, of the deliverance of the negro from your legalized power to abuse and wrong him?

The only difference will be, the difference between cultivating your estate by free and slave labor. The money sunk, will remain the same. It will neither be increased nor diminished by the righting of the negro.—His labor alone, is your actual advantage. Now, if any means can be devised, whereby, you can get him to labor more profitably for you, at a less expense, you will clearly be a gainer. But emancipation will do this for you—not *gradual* emancipation, or *half-way* emancipation, which will leave his moral powers crippled, and his moral feelings outraged, and his moral motives chilled; but emancipation, such as is his right, and such as power only, disgraced and perverted, keeps from him for a moment. As a free laborer, he will cost you less wages, than together with the unprofitable members of his family, he now costs you; and as a willing laborer, he will work more profitably for you, than your cart-whip, or your stocks can ever compel him to do.

But where should we get funds to carry on our cultivation, if our property were taken from us?

Your property would not be taken from you. It would be improved.—The capital which is sunk in your negroes, *is* sunk. It does not now supply your current expenditure; but on the contrary, is a heavy burthen to you. You must have *other* sources of supply for your current expenses; these will not be touched by the emancipation in question; but they will rather

be benefitted by the comparative security which results from the harmony instituted between the negroes' interests and your own.

But should I wish to sell, where is my money? The capital sunk in my negroes, will surely then be gone, as I shall have no negroes to sell.

Not so.—Although you will have no negroes to sell, you will have a substitute, equally, or more valuable. You will have the recovered value of your land. Wherever slavery prevails, land without slaves, is of little or no use; and as the purchase of slaves is very heavy, and the possession is always precarious and dangerous; few, comparatively, can embark in the speculation. The finest land remains, as it were, a drug, because ten thousand acres of it, without slaves, where you can get no other laborers, must remain a wilderness. But abolish slavery, and at once you have as many free laborers as you had slaves, each standing in the market anxious for employment. Get one hundred acres then, and you can immediately render it productive by hiring such laborers as you need for its cultivation. Thus the land resumes its value; and in its recovered and increasing worth, you have an ample security for the capital sunk, whenever you may wish to sell.

But the negroes will leave us.

We can see no reason to believe it—except, indeed, you be one of these wretches, who, by the atrocities of despotic power, doubly abused, have succeeded in awakening wrath even in the kind negro's bosom, and have convinced him beyond denial, that his only alternative for peace is to leave you. In every other case, why should he go? To whom should he go? Whither could he go? He would not leave you—he could, as a general truth, have no motive for leaving you. Every motive which wields the heart of man, would require him to stay. He would want his cot—where could he get another, should he leave you? He would want his field—where could he get a better? He would want a master to hire him. Why should he leave you, if you have not proved to him beyond contradiction, that you are singularly unfit to be trusted? If he went from you, it would not be *we*, who took him away, but it would be yourself alone, who drove him from you. All that we should have done, would be to take away from him the motives which you are now giving him to leave you if he could; and to make it his interest, and his honor, and his happiness, to remain with you, secured alike with yourself, beneath the sacred and pleasant panoply of righteous law.

Here we ought to observe, that there is one class of the criminals not included in the preceding remarks. These are the *Jobbers*, as they are called, who have slaves, but have no lands. Much of the force of what has been said, clearly does not apply to them. If their slaves were to be freed, they would lose their slave property, and many of them have none other. In a moral and everlasting sense, the emancipation of their negroes, would be to them also, an unspeakably important benefit: but in a pecuniary sense, they would be losers. I stop here merely to notice, not to discuss the fact; and I will simply add, that in the vast expanse of fertile lands, which still belong to the government in the slave colonies, the amplest means exist of making every provision for them, which compassion or equity can demand, without the expense of a shilling to the nation.

Should it further be said, "admitting your whole argument, still, as the present proprietors might suffer by the foreclosure of mortgages through the fears of mortgagees, upon such an extreme change of circumstances, and through the unwillingness of capitalists to risk their funds during the uncertainty, which for the time at least, would be suspended over the event, and as you have unquestionably been accomplices in the crime, you, as unquestionably, ought to share in the loss." We may observe, that the gov-

ernment might provide against this apprehended danger, by making loans, wherever requisite, upon the same security as other mortgagees, at three or four per cent, to the present proprietors, wherever they might need funds, in order to enable them to contend fairly with whatever difficulties might arise. By this means, the proprietors would have an easier and more certain command of money, at one half or one third of the expense to which they are now exposed, and the government, without countenancing the impious claim of compensation, as antecedent for a moment, or as in any degree an equal duty, to the immediate rescue of the king's unoffending subjects from the petty despots of the plantations, would provide against loss to its partners in guilt, as far as human help can provide; while in the increased value of land in the colonies; in the newly acquired security of property; in the extention of commerce; and in the general happiness of the people, it would be itself as secure, as human things can be.

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